

Working Draft of “Qualities of an Effective Action Research Report”

> *The research question is significant, manageable, and clearly stated.*

A **significant** question is one that focuses on teaching and learning practices that could have an impact on students’ behavior or achievement.

A **manageable** question is one that is do-able within the time constraints of the researcher. It is neither so broad as to be impossible to answer nor so narrow that it cannot offer much insight.

A **clearly stated** question is one that accurately conveys the focus and scope of the research.

> *The research methods are sufficient, appropriate, and exhibit triangulation.*

Research methods are **sufficient** when they generate enough data to provide some answers or insights.

Research methods are **appropriate** when they generate the type of data that could address or answer the question.

Research methods that collect data from three different sources **exhibit triangulation**. (e.g. teacher observations, student interviews, videotapes)

> *The descriptive account or narrative (story) of the study is sufficient, appropriate, and vividly expressed through specific examples and detailed vignettes.*

The descriptive account is **sufficient** if it gives the reader a clear picture of what actions the researcher used and of how the subjects of the study responded to these actions.

The descriptive account is **appropriate** if it provides the necessary information to understand the basis for the researcher’s insights or conclusions.

The descriptive account is **vivid** if the reader can picture what occurred as a result of numerous details, quotes, samples of student work, or episodes.

Action Research Facilitators Handbook

- > *The interpretation or analysis is reflective, insightful, and clearly supported by the data.***

The interpretation is **reflective** if it shows evidence that the researcher has given considerable thought to the actions of oneself and the other subjects of the study.

The interpretation is **insightful** if it leads the researcher to some new ways of looking at or understanding the activities under study.

The interpretation is **clearly supported by the data** when the researcher can reveal in a convincing way how the data leads to and justifies the interpretation.

- > *Conclusions contain a logical plan for follow-up action steps.***

The conclusions **contain a logical plan for follow-up** when the researcher specifies what actions he/she will take next as a result of what was learned and what he/she might recommend for others interested in the same question.

- > *Identities have been protected.***

The people in the study have been **protected** when they cannot be identified or, when necessary, have given written permission to be part of the study.

- > *The tone of the report is professionally respectful to colleagues in the program or school.***

The tone is **professionally respectful** to colleagues if it does not make its point by criticizing or negatively presenting one's colleagues. The focus of the report is a study of the actions of the researcher, not the actions of one's colleagues.

- > *The report reflects genuine interest on the part of the researcher and addresses issues that would be of genuine interest to others.***

A report that **reflects genuine interest on the part of the researcher** is one that appears to have meaning and importance to the researcher. It is not merely a response to an assignment from an administrator or a professor.

A report that **focuses on issues that would be of genuine interest to others** is one that is broad enough to be applicable, generalizable, or useful to others.

- > *The report is well-written.***

A **well-written** report is one characterized by a logical flow of ideas, proper grammatical usage, correct spelling, and clear and effective sentence structure.